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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [KTIP](#) [KWMN](#) [KCRM](#) [SOCI](#) [SCUL](#) [NG](#)
SUBJECT: NIGER - TIP WATCHLIST INTERIM ASSESSMENT

REF: STATE 110849

[1](#)1. Summary: Niger is taking several steps to reduce the incidence and consequences of trafficking in persons and raise public awareness, but needs to pass long-awaited legislation to give authorities leverage to prosecute traffickers. End summary.

[1](#)2. Updates over the past year are as follows:

[1](#)A. Finalizing, passing, and enacting the 2006 draft legislation against trafficking:

The draft trafficking in persons law has yet to be adopted. Once adopted by the Council of Ministers, the bill would go to the single-chamber National Assembly for consideration; passage by a simple majority would permit the bill to proceed to the Presidency for signature. In September 2008, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice noted that failure to pass the bill would stall other trafficking in persons reforms and efforts to prosecute related cases.

[1](#)B. Strengthen efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict individuals guilty of slavery and other forms of human trafficking:

In the appeal regarding the July 2006 enslavement case Timidria and Haoulata Ibrahim vs. Seidimou Hiyar, the Court of Appeals of Niamey sentenced the defendant to two years' imprisonment (six months to be served behind bars and 18 months suspended) and fined 100,000 FCFA (\$200) in damages. While the defendant served his prison term, he still has not paid the damages. On October 27, 2008, in a landmark ruling regarding the case Timidria and Hadidjatou Mani Koraou vs. the Government of Niger, the ECOWAS Court of Justice recognized that Ms. Mani Koraou had been a victim of slavery and held the Government of Niger responsible for the inaction of its administrative legal services, which failed to protect a woman sold into slavery. The court fined the Government of Niger 10 million FCFA (\$20,000) in damages to the victim. The GON said it would abide by the ruling.

In October 2008, police in Gaya arrested a man when he could not give proof regarding his relationship with several children with whom he was travelling. The police handed over the children to the district of Gaya's Office of Women's Promotion and Children's Protection. During the same period, the same office handed over 11 young girls presumed to be victims of trafficking to the Benin border police.

[1](#)C. Taking steps to rescue and assist victims of traditional slavery:

On March 20, 2008, Reagir Dans le Monde (RDM-Tanafili), a local NGO, with support from local government officials and traditional leaders, rescued and assisted six families of former slaves (40 people) in purchasing land from their former masters in Tajae, Tahoua region. The GON, with support from UNICEF, established regional committees to control child trafficking in various regions of the country including Agadez, Niamey, Zinder, and Tillabery. So far, 30 watchdog teams have been created in various localities to support the regional committees.

In mid-2008, the Makalondi Welcome and Transit Center for Child Victims of Trafficking, in cooperation with Nigerien police and UNICEF, rescued, rehabilitated, and returned to their families 36 children. In October 2008, a local NGO partner of UNICEF with support from GON officials rescued and commenced the rehabilitation of 37 child trafficking victims in Agadez. The suspects were released without charges, due to a lack of trafficking laws.

1D. Adopting the draft national action plan to combat slavery and other forms of human trafficking:

Regrettably, Niger's national action plan remains weak policy guidance lacking in statutory authority in the absence of passage of legislation against trafficking.

1E. Increasing efforts to raise awareness about traditional slavery practices and the law against slavery:

Public and private media broadcast sensitization campaigns; this includes an Embassy-funded televised skit with the NGO "EPAD" on the evils of child trafficking. Since May 2008, the skit has appeared nightly just before and/or after the major news broadcasts on private and state television in French and local languages. On March 22, 2008, the French Cultural Center hosted the official unveiling of two books on slavery in Africa, one Niger specific, at which the Minister of Justice was a keynote speaker. On June 3, 2008, the Moslem clerics held a code of conduct workshop on children's rights and the proper treatment of children under their charge in Koranic schools.

On July 29-31, 2008, Niger's First Lady presided over the opening ceremony for the Third Consultation on the Multilateral Agreement in

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the Fight against the Trafficking of Children in West Africa. She was joined by the Minister of Justice, Governor of Niamey, and the Minister of Women's Promotion and Children Protection.

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